

HOUSE RESOLUTION 174
By Hood

A RESOLUTION to designate May 15, 2003, as National Peace Officers' Memorial Day in Murfreesboro.

WHEREAS, in providing for the domestic tranquility of the community as a whole, society recognizes the need for a system of laws; and

WHEREAS, the enforcement of such laws has been entrusted to a small number of dedicated individuals; these individuals, known as law enforcement officers, daily face the rigors of human conflict in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, May 15 of each year, as established by the United States Congress in 1962 and signed into law by President John F. Kennedy of that year, is designated as National Peace Officers' Memorial Day, which is observed in conjunction with National Police Week; and

WHEREAS, the first National Peace Officers' Memorial Day Service was held in Washington, D.C., on May 15, 1982, while the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial was dedicated in our nation's capital on October 15, 1991; and

WHEREAS, the 103rd Congress amended the law in 1994 to direct that the U.S. Flag be lowered to half-staff on National Peace Officers' Memorial Day; the amendment was signed into law by President Bill Clinton; and

WHEREAS, since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been more than 15,000 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, 1,647 law enforcement officers have given their lives in the line of duty during the last 10 years, an average of one death every 53 hours, or 165 deaths per year; 230 Police Officers died in 2001, which represents a 49 percent increase from the 159 officers who died in 2000; and

WHEREAS, on average, more than 60,000 law enforcement officers are assaulted each year and some 19,000 are injured; and

WHEREAS, engraved on the Memorial Wall in Washington are the names of 853 federal officers, 19,000 correctional officers, and 43 military law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty, in addition to the thousands of local law enforcement officers who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, the City of Murfreesboro has traditionally joined the United States in remembering and honoring National Peace Officers' Memorial Day; the Murfreesboro Police Department will be holding a flag-raising and wreath-laying ceremony on May 15, 2003; in remembrance of all officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the communities they protect, the Murfreesboro Police Department asks that on this significant day, citizens fly their American Flags at half-mast and that motorists turn their headlights on low beam; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Bill Jones of the Murfreesboro Police Department has stated, "The professional careers of law enforcement officers are often referred to as the 'thin blue line' that separates order from chaos"; and

WHEREAS, numerous citizens of the Murfreesboro community have placed blue ribbons on their car antennas as part of the Murfreesboro Police Department's Blue Ribbon Campaign; these ribbons are symbols of support and remembrance for those officers who have given their lives while performing their duties; and

WHEREAS, the Murfreesboro Police Department has lost two of its officers since the Department was created; on December 16, 1946, Officer Herbert McClanahan was shot and killed in the line of duty; Joseph "Butch" Tomlinson, Jr. was killed in a tragic traffic accident while on duty on October 28, 1999; these officers heroically gave their lives while protecting the citizens of Murfreesboro; and

WHEREAS, each year, approximately 35 million crimes are committed in the United States, an average of more than one crime every second; this is the lowest level of crime in approximately 25 years; violent crime rates have declined by 21 percent since they peaked in 1993, and non-violent crimes have dropped by 22 percent since 1993; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers are the first line of defense between criminals and law-abiding citizens, and they must often make life and death decisions in an instant; they are trained not only to enforce the law but to do so without prejudice or malice, while using good judgment and discretion, and with the highest regard for the constitutional rights of all people; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers must possess a general knowledge of medicine and psychology, as well as courage, courtesy, respect, and self-restraint; they can never allow their personal feelings to influence their decisions; and

WHEREAS, officers recognize that the badge is a symbol of public trust, and they must be forever mindful of the trust placed in them; they must strive to earn that trust, even in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that those officers who have dedicated their lives to the service of humanity through law enforcement, and those officers who have given their lives in this noble cause, be recognized and remembered for the accomplishment of their high purposes; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee is proud to join forces with the United States Congress, the City of Murfreesboro, the Murfreesboro Police Department, and all concerned

citizens throughout Tennessee and the United States to observe "National Peace Officers' Memorial Day"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby designate May 15, 2003, as "Peace Officers' Memorial Day" in Murfreesboro.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all citizens to take this opportunity to honor and remember those courageous law enforcement officers who have given their lives to protect the communities in which they work and live.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.